PURSUIT

The Star's Fiction Series, by Leading American Authors

By Henry Sydnor Harrison

The Author: Henry Sydnor Harrison.

It is like shaking hands with an old friend to see the name of Henry Sydnor Harrison. Some years ago his first book, "Queed," gave him instant place among American novelists. Then at intervals—for Mr. Harrison is an author who works long and with infinite care—came "V. V.'s Eyes" and "Angela's Business," both successes. His latest novel is "Saint Teresa."

To get a short story from Mr. Harrison is an event, his time is so fully occupied with work scheduled ahead. "Pursuit" may be a bit cynical, but it gives much food for thought and reflection.

Mr. Harrison is the only bachelor on our all-star list of American authors.

MARY STEWART CUTTING, Jr.

IN THE STILL MIDNIGHT SPED THE SLIM, WHITE-CLAD WIFE, AND HARD BEHIND CHASED HER HUSBAND.

IT was the evening of May Hesketh's picnic supper, small but memorable; and now the clocks, had there been any on the island, would have pointed close to midnight. What was so rare as this night in June? Sailing wisps of cloud shredded the face of the high moon; the blackness of the woods, the glades and dells, the vine-covered rocks and the empty quarry, were stippled and patched with silver; the lake was a sheet of silver stretching far away to lose itself in a lovely dusk. Through the verdure a soft breeze whispered; from the water floated voices of the merrymakers, receding; and the woman stealing on light feet up the path, a slim and not incongruous figure in her white bathing dress, with unbound dark hair streaming to her waist, reflected that, for an hour at least, she would be alone here.

But it was not so. From the impenetrable shadows, as she neared the ruined cabin, the figure of a man abruptly emerged upon the path. He stood confronting her. She started a little, and then she saw, with a wild shout of satisfaction, that this man was her husband.

"You!" she said, with the faintly mocking air she had long ago learned for him. "But fancy meeting you here!"

"You—you looked like a——" He began, a little confusedly, and then, breaking off, he cleared his throat and started again, more authoritatively: "I don't say I approve of that suit, but—but it does seem to fit in with the surroundings somehow. You might almost have been mistaken—at a distance, that is—for a hamadryad. But——"

"And what may they be? Something very nice to be mistaken for, may I hope! But I supposed you'd gone in the launch."

"No, no. I'm tired of drunks," said he, continuing to stare at her. "And, besides, swimming at night—ah—affects my sinus, as you once used to know. But you—why did you come back? You—you forgot something?"

She was smiling faintly. Her dark eyes derided him.

"I almost forgot myself, if you count that! But no, in your sense, I'm not forgetful, only punitive. My sinus is sound, but my temper uncertain. So I didn't go. A sweet night, isn't it? Well!"

"But—what is it? Why, what happened?"

"Oh, that. Yes, to be sure. I was unexpectedly kissed, you see. In the dark behind the boathouse, just as we were ready to start—oh, most ferociously, I assure you. Really that made me angry, though, of course, not so angry as I seemed. So I'm letting him paddle himself over alone."

Her husband's dim heavy face seemed to darken. "Him? Who was it?"

"My dear Horace, you'll agree that kissing and telling isn't quite the act of a lady? No, no! But I'm interrupting your reverie."

"No! Tell me! I—I want to know."

"Your air of interest is awfully civil, Horace. But I can't really believe that you've begun at this late day to take an interest in my private life!"

Her merriment exasperated him, clearly.

"Howard Witheredge, I suppose—damn his impudence! What you can see in that——"

"Oh, name me no names, please! And the incident's really not worth mentioning. I'm merely disciplining a beau, that's all. So we two have the pretty wilds all to ourselves; only think! Charmingly conjugal! But be sure I won't intrude, no. I'm off to dress. Good-bye!"

"No, no! Don't go. I——"

Having controlled himself with an obvious effort, the man resumed with awkward carelessness:

"Ah, it seems too bad for you to miss your moonlight dip, when you enjoy it so—merely on account of the behavior of an alcoholic cad. Hem. I was about to say I'll paddle you over to the Pulpit myself."

She eyed him quizzically, and all at once was aware of the beating of her heart.

* * * *

THE two stood close together in the darkness and beauty of the woods. The man's ponderous dignity was manifestly a little strained. Why? For a long time past, indeed, it had been evident that she had undermined his case in their relationship. For weeks she had been conscious, in her withdrawals and through the silences that she had made so common between them, that he regarded her with a new attentiveness. But he had stopped there; his price—or some cowardice, perhaps?—had restrained him from word or act. Was it the romantic solitude now and the sudden sight of her in her wood-nymph's guise? Was it the thought of those kisses she had just taken from another? What? Into her husband's eyes had come a look she had not seen these three years, and she wondered suddenly if, here and now, beyond all calculation, her great moment had come at last.

But do you think that she would yield anything to him? Not she.

Ironically grave, she answered: "You are always kind, Horace. But, of course, I'd not dream of imposing on you that way."

"No imposition at all. I'd enjoy it. We find ourselves deserted, each by our own choice. What more logical than to join forces, eh?"

"Logical!"

"And—and pleasant," said he with his labored lightness. "Why not? Or, if you don't care to join the party now, after what happened, why, we might just paddle about for a while. The night—the night's fine," said Horace.

"Canoeing in the moonlight with one's husband! My dear man, do you want to make me the laughing-stock of the county?"

Her laughter, thrilling unexpectedly, took him quite aback; stung him, too, as she saw with pleasure.

"A very little of that sort of thing," she said, "and gossip would soon begin connecting our names!"

"I don't think you run many risks of that," he retorted with marked stiffness. "And I wish you'd cease this—this extravagant way of talking. It's provoking. Now come along. I—we'll enjoy it."

"On the contrary, I should die of shame."

"You're being absurd. Come!"

"A thousand thanks, but no."

There was a silence. The breeze fluttered her long hair.

"I see you actually prefer the society of drunken male flirts to that of * * * And this is typical, too——"

He finished, all but impulsively for him: "I'm sure you can't realize, Laurel, how little we actually see of each other—these days."

Ah, but did she not realize!

She leaned back against the slender bole of a white birch and stared up at him, liquid-eyed.

"How little! Why, Horace—good gracious! That's literally all I can say—good gracious! Seven days a week under the same roof, but separated a single day in——"

"I know, I know!" he said in another tone, embarrassed. "It seems odd, I own—I'd hardly think it was possible. And still—I was, of course, sure you weren't conscious of it, but——"

He hesitated, peering at her with his short-sighted eyes; and then the natural man let go a little more of the unnatural constraint.

"Why, Laurel! You go out somewhere every evening, with or without me; or, if you don't go out, you have people in. At odd moments, when there are any, in the little between times, as I might term them, you're always reading, or studying, or practicing something, or else you're writing letters or you have a headache. Saturdays and Sundays, and usually week days, too, you have people staying in the house, all over the place. Noise, and dancing, and parties, and rushing about. Never a quiet moment of—of just the domestic sort!"

"You certainly make it sound different from the home life of our dear queen! I'd no idea it was so bad as that."

"I understate it, if anything. But—well, we won't go into it now. My point is: Here, by chance, we have a quiet hour for once—charming nature and no noise—no drunks. Well, don't let's spend it standing on these rocks when the lake's right there. Come!"

She shook her head in silence, faintly smiling. Gently she released the hand that he had abruptly clutched. She thought his massive face paled a little then.

* * * *

FROM far away over the water came the faint, muffled echoes of song. The sound but accentuated the pervasive stillness. On the solitary trail the husband and wife steadily eyed each other, and she was thrilled with the knowledge of her immeasurable victory. In that second her mind's eye flashed backward. She thought of Anders Carthew and the time and scene which had been the turning point of her life.

When she had married this man, glowering at her now in the primal woods, he loved her madly, and she, as she had soon understood, was actually all but indifferent to him. Within six months her interest in him had become acute and constant; while he, incredibly, was detected in recurring lapses of ardor. After two years she adored him without restraint, and for days and weeks together he was frankly bored with her. Why? Was it the everlasting law of things that a relation can support only so much love, as a bucket holds so much water? Certainly efforts to charm this grave senior by doubling her wifely thoughtfulness and sweet subjections had but increased his ennui. There had come the inevitable day when she, with floods of tears, had packed her trunks and gone off on the usual indefinite visit to her mother.

So far their story had followed a familiar course. Would that have been the end of it, right there, but for Anders Carthew? Nothing seemed to her more certain. Beyond doubt Anders, who was twice her age and had taken an interest in her, paternal or otherwise, from her sixteenth year, had penetrated her with a new and startling concept. For Anders wouldn't accept — he would hardly listen to—her own ready formula, long since smoothed by the women of all ages. "Oh, no," he had said, in his merciless, kind way. "It isn't that you 'love him too well.' That's letting yourself down too easily. It's simply that you love him with too little pride—and no good sense at all." And a little later, when she had conquered her first furious indignation and sat down again, he spoke words which she took at last for truth, and which filled her in the end with an overmastering purpose. For Anders had said that a man's necessity is not to be loved, but to love; and that, to love, his fixed need is to pursue—and conquer.

* * * *

SO she, because she had a will, and it seemed that her whole life was at stake, had actually achieved this impossible. She had warped her nature, she had broken her heart to pieces; she had recovered the reserves of maidenhood, made herself again mysterious to this once familiar; she had fanned the last flickering ember to a flame. Now here he stood suing her in the romantic night—her Horace, bored no longer, and still and still * * * Was it not ironical that, here in the instant of her tremendous triumph, her mood should be so skeptical and cool? How large was Horace's nose, she unsentimentally considered, how halting his tongue, how really small his vanity and caution. Had something then permanently passed away? In the long process of repression, of moral separation, so painful at first, had she wrought in herself an irreparable change?

She wondered, smiling shadowily, in that second of thick silence. Now the man, having drawn back a step, spoke abruptly:

"Look here, what's come over you?"

"Come over me?"

"You've changed so much—just in this last year—that you're like another person—a stranger."

To be sure, her heart swelled a little at that.

"But you hardly offer that as a complaint, Horace? Hastily recalling our past, I feel sure you must find any change in me an improvement."

"That's just the tone I don't like from you, Laurel! This constantly evasive manner. Flippant, I am bound to call it, and—and provoking. I think the time's come to remind you that a husband has some rights—and I'm not getting mine!"

"But—why, all this is news to me, my dear! Your rights! I'd thought you were frightfully fatigued with them, whatever they are, years ago, and gladly——"

"Never! No! Ridiculous. I——"

"Ah, that poor memory of yours, failing you again, I see!" said she, shaking her finger in a manner insufferably satirical; and resumed demurely: "But of course I'm glad that you've forgotten that day—when I, sobbing like a deserted village lass, most crudely taxed you with having ceased to love me, and you, poor dear, could only reply, 'There, there!' Most soothingly, I own, yet it mortified me at the time, I remember. You've forgotten explaining to me that life wasn't meant to be an unending song of romance; that it was normal and necessary; that the disturbing heyday of love should descend to afternoon, to twilight——"

"So that's it!" he interrupted suddenly. "You've never got over that one little scene—a mere incident!" "Oh, I remember. I've been thinking back a good deal, here lately," he went on, rather thickly. "You went off on a visit to your mother's then, and when you came back, the change had come—that was the time. You'd assumed this singular and unwifely attitude; this unfair——"

"What adjectives, my dear Horace! Was it unwifely or unfair to learn the lesson my own husband set me?"

"That's more flippancy—you know it is. Look here—I wish to know. Did you then—or have you at any time since—come to take an interest in—in somebody else?"

* * * *

SHE looked up through the black leaves toward the moon, an odd tumult in her breast, and laughed a little.

"Your questions astound me, of course. And I'd supposed that even a wife was entitled to some privacy. Remember, Horace, I've never questioned you, though all the world has known when you've looked over the fence. But the breeze is freshening and I've detained you long enough. Now I'll dress, waiting in the cabin——"

"Not so fast, not so fast!" said her husband, blocking her way. "We've started a conversation; we'll finish it now!"

"Oh, pardon me, I thought you had finished."

"No, I've not finished! Laurel, I wish to know plainly: "Are you trying to say, by—all this—that you no longer love me?"

"Oh! Really! I'm afraid I've never thought to ask myself such a question."

"Ask yourself now. I insist. It is my right."

Her merriment died.

"I am. And Horace," she said, regarding him duskily, "honestly—I don't know the answer."

Yet in that moment, exactly, she seemed to herself to have the answer. Yes, something had gone out of her, now and forever. Funny, but you couldn't crack and make over your nature for nothing.

"Oh, you don't know?" he said darkly. "Well, the time's come for you to find out!"

"Why? What's your interest in the ancient point? Haven't I the best authority for saying that love wasn't meant——"

"That's enough of that! I won't have this attitude any longer. Plenty of time—and kisses too, it seems—for every whipper-snapping nincompoop—nothing at all for the man you married."

"But, my dear Horace, I can't turn myself on and off like a hot-water faucet! And the nincompoops never taught me that the heydey of romance——"

"Stop provoking me this way!"

"Willingly. Good-bye! But, indeed, you mustn't think of me as a stranger, Horace. I assure you I'll always think of you as among my very best friends."

His dim face flooded with color.

"You're my wife. Do you understand that? My wife!"

"Wife is a relative term," she said a little faintly, again seeking to pass him. "But I'll leave you now."

"I'm damned if you will," said the man, in a terrible voice.

And, his dignity broken altogether, he seized her furiously in his arms.

The violence of that embrace astonished her. Still more surprising, perhaps, was the wave of resistance, of instinctive repulsion even, that swept through her.

She succeeded in extricating herself and backing away rapidly, shaken and angry, and vigorously rubbed with the palm of her hand the cheek her husband's lips had just grazed. Still, her fixed smile mocked him.

"Don't you think, all things considered, that's quite a liberty "

He lunged for her, saying gutterally:

"I'll show you a liberty!—God! You forget yourself—you need to be taught——"

"No!—p-positively, you don't know me well enough for this! Please!—You brute!——"

* * * *

SHE managed again, though with difficulty, to free herself from those violent, clutching arms. Her light airs were gone. She had thought just now that if Horace touched her, she might actually hate him; it had not occurred to her that she would fear him, yet so it was. Now, as he came after her again, muscularly potent and altogether willful, panic, suddenly and unaccountably, took possession of her. Without having planned anything of the sort, she wheeled abruptly in her tracks and fled away from him.

If that was a confession of weakness, unluckily it did not settle her difficulty on the spot. With dismay, she heard the large feet of Horace pounding after her down the path.

She ran as for her life.

It was a sight for the gods, no doubt. In the still midnight beneath the serene moon, in this lonely place, wildly and primitively beautiful, through the groves and among the crags sped the slim, white-clad wife, dark hair flowing after; and hard behind, grunting and snorting, menacing, too, chased the heavy-built man, her husband. Different from the home life of the queen, indeed!

On the open path, his clumsiness was equalized. She looked back, fearfully, over her shoulder. He was gaining on her; no doubt of that. Instantly she left the path, scrambling over the rough boulders which flanked it here, plunging into the copses, if such they were, bounding away through the virgin woods, sure-footed as a fawn. With a wild bursting of foliage and cracking of boughs, Horace leapt after her. On the difficult terrain, her superior nimbleness gave her the advantage; the distance between them steadily widened. Once she heard his hoarse voice panting, "Stop! I tell you, stop!" Now the strange thrill of the chase, the throbing excitement of the quarry, set her blood afire. She thought, "Pursue, and love!"—and laughing frantically to herself, flew the faster. And then, as she sped across a sweet open space, a glade no doubt, powdered with bright moonlight, she glanced back again, unwisely. Alas, her foot caught in a trailing vine and she pitched to the sward. The misfortune, which wasn't rectified in a second, cost her her lead. Releasing herself, rising dizzily, she found the pursuer almost upon her—almost, but not quite. She just eluded his fingers, breathlessly dodging; she doubled and turned; and so, in a moment, suddenly, she found her feet set on the winding path again, and lo, just ahead, was the old landing, and beyond, open water.

She had forgotten the water; she welcomed the sight of it now. She was quite spent, and those resolute feet were close behind. Flying over the loose boards, the harried wife dived cleanly into the haven of the lake.

That Horace would follow her in this maneuver had not occurred to her. He was an indifferent swimmer, and his sinus, as we know, was sensitive. Never having seen him angry before, however, she had no doubt underestimated the force of his rage. In fact, the conquering male did not hesitate an instant. His ponderous body, flying feet first, broke water hardly a second behind her own.

Unhappily for her, the lake was shallow here, a tall man could stand on the bottom, and Horace was tall. In fine, while she was still submerged her foot was roughly seized. Coming up, spluttering, she found herself effectually prisoned.

* * * *

THUS the man, like Neptune with a mermaid, had his way. The stars looked down upon the odd conjugal caress. Upon the woman's lips, gasping and watery, the lips of Horace, just as gasping, came waterily down. Though her heart hammered with a wild excitement, there was now no strength in her. After an instant her feeble struggles ceased. Another instant and, marvelously, resistance seemed no longer of any importance. Under this masterful embrace the wife's will, her whole being, indeed, seemed all at once mysteriously to dissolve within her.

"You witch! I will adore you forever," panted Horace wetly.

And then her bare dripping arms, lifting, went around his neck.

Under the impulse of his great love the days and the weeks that followed became for the wedded pair like a new and richer honeymoon. Her elusiveness faded, her reticences and reserves—all the provocative withdrawals, learned after how much tribulation, came to seem not only superfluous, but altogether unworthy. Since Horace gave so lavishly, how inconceivably mean spirited to dole back to him with a thrifty and calculating hand!

Willingly young Laurel let herself go.

The new banns brought their unexperienced blessing. Now God was ready, in the old phrase, to smile upon this union. There came another June and then another, and Laurel's first child was six months old.

Otherwise, perhaps, it would hardly have been bearable.

She sat in her room near the screened open window, nursing her boy, whom she had no thought of weaning as yet. The sultry afternoon was quiet. From the piazza below floated up the voice of her husband, idly exchanging domestic views with his adoring mother, arrived the day before for her yearly visit, but she did not need that sound to make her remember his nearness. On the stand beside her lay a note from Howard Witheredge, who had lately "come into her life" again. She had just been thinking that nothing could be more symbolical than that.

Her name came vaguely wafting up to her.

"Laurel's stoutened," said her mother-in-law, rocking comfortably, though with a touch of asthma. "It's not unbecoming to her. I think she has—settled—somehow, Horace. She has gained in poise."

"Yes, she's matured very much since the baby came," said Horace, and yawned a little.

"She is charming still. And a more exemplary and devoted wife I never saw. That pleases me so much. Do you know, my son," continued Mrs. Seymour suddenly, "two years ago when I was here—that spring—I was rather afraid she was drifting away from you—just a little?"

"Really! What an idea! No, I remember that summer on the lake particularly," said Horace thoughtfully. "We had a wonderful time."

"Oh, it's evident enough that I was mistaken," said his mother archly. "She absolutely worships you. That's as clear as noonday."

"Oh, yes," said Horace.

There was a little silence. Down in the pasture lot, behind the barn, the buxom new dairymaid was climbing over the stile. The lass had a trim leg. Having adjusted his glasses a little, Horace satisfied himself on that point.

"In fact, if the dear creature has a fault at all," he finished indolently, "I'd say that she loves me a little too well."

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Spuds: A Self-Made Dog

He Was a Tramp by Nature—Being a Mongrel Dog, He had No Connections and Desired None—But One Day Traffic Cop Charlie Clark Saved His Life and Then Couldn't Lose Him. Spuds Adopted Charlie and Became Respectable and Respected.

BY C. M. WAGNER.

SPUDS is not much of a dog when it comes to the social events of the 400 of the dog world. But when it comes to that greatest of all virtues, gratitude, Spuds' diminutive shoulders tower far above the heads of the milk-fed aristocrats who eye him disdainfully from the soft cushions of their motor cars.

Spuds is just an ordinary mongrel who makes a precarious living trotting around the streets of Newark. At least, he did at one time. Today he is probably the best known dog in the entire city. He is a success if there ever was one. He has had his picture on the front pages of the newspapers, he has been interviewed by star reporters and he is a celebrity in his own right. He is a self-made dog and he carries his honors with dignity and modesty, just as self-made men do.

Spuds started out on his career in very inglorious fashion. No one knows just where he was born or anything about his ancestors except that they must have been very ordinary mongrels, if Spuds is a true son. One day Spuds decided to forsake the old homesteaders and strike out for himself. He seemed to find the world of streets, of alleys and garbage cans a fascinating one and became a confirmed tramp.

For a short time he was adopted by the school children in one of the big public schools of the city, and was petted and fed until he waxed very sleek and elegant, but he soon tired of the soft life and struck out again. He avoided that school like the plague whenever his wanderings took him anywhere near it.

* * * *

ONE day Spuds stopped in front of the city hall on Broad street and eyed the imposing structure with interest. He had never seen such an imposing building before, with its white stone trimmings and broad, shining stairs.

He had been in all kinds of hovels and shacks and tenement houses, where he had sometimes been received with open arms, but more often with curses and kicks. Still his nomad soul had never been discouraged and he entered each new building with the spirit of the explorer.

Spuds decided that he would explore the city hall. He eyed the tall smiling traffic cop on the corner calmly as he trotted by him and stopped for a moment at the foot of the stairs. Then he wagged his stub of a tail and started up the stairs.

Nothing happened to him. He slipped through the great door and headed across the marble corridor.

When he reached the center of the hall he sat down and looked about meditatively. It was so cool and comfortable on the marble floor. Spuds let out a yip of joy at his discovery. That yip was unfortunate.

He felt the tip of a broad toe pressed gently but firmly against his ribs. He looked up and found a watchman explaining politely, if forcibly, that the City Hall was no lounging place for a mongrel pup on whose paws time hung heavily. Spuds looked resentful for a moment and then headed for the door like a streak of lightning.

He didn't quite know what it was all about. A panic seemed to seize him; for once he was terrified. How he thanked his stars when he reached the top of the landing and caught a glimpse of the sunlight and the sky again! In his eagerness he whirled down the long flight of stone stairs like an animated ball of fur. Without stopping to look to left or right he sped across the street.

Suddenly Spuds heard a grating roar in his ears. Somewhere dimly he heard a woman scream. He caught just a glimpse of a huge trolley car bearing down upon him rapidly.

He gave one despairing howl and tried to stop. His feet slipped and he skidded with claws vainly trying to grip the hard pavement. Just as the car was about to hit him he felt a strong hand sweep him from the ground, and he found himself clutched up to a hard chest. Spuds sobbed and buried his head in the khaki uniform he found around him.

* * * *

HE was dimly aware of voices that died away after a minute or two and he timidly looked out at the world again. When he lifted his head he found himself looking into the smiling face of Charlie Clark, traffic cop in front of the City Hall.

"That was a narrow squeak you had, my boy," said Charlie. "Never cross a street without looking to the right and left, and watch out for the trolley cars. They'd clip you an awful shot if they hit you," he continued gravely.

With that he carried Spuds to the curbstone and left him while he went back to his job of guarding the crossing.

Spuds sat down with wonder in his eyes. After a time he got up and strolled across the street and sat down at Officer Charlie's feet. He had made up his mind. It was time he stopped roaming around the streets like a tramp. He would settle down.

And he did. He's been settled down ever since. He is as familiar a sight on the crossing in front of the City Hall as Charlie ever was. Spuds adopted Charlie, and that ended the matter as far as he was concerned.

AROUND THE CITY

By Nannie Lancaster

A REFINED woman, suddenly bereft of financial support, was compelled to go to work for herself and child. Untrained, there was no line in which she was sufficiently skilled to obtain employment. She was not young enough to fit herself for any specialty, and, besides, she must have immediate money for rent and food. In such crises, clothes do not count. Failing in every effort to gain usual employment, she had to take the first job that she could find—a poor job in a garment shop at piecework wages; so many shirts, say, at so many cents, with a swarm of women coralled in a crowded, close-air room, with their sewing machines clattering ceaselessly for eight hours a day. On the first day, she felt that she must rush out or faint for want of fresh air, but—many of us know what we manage to endure when starvation is the driver!

None of the employes was of a class that she had ever known, but the one whose machine was next to hers was so personally objectionable that she felt that she must—she must—ask to be moved to another machine. But, of course, she did not; she was too abject to ask favors.

The work—so many garments ready-cut for stitching—was laid on each machine in the morning, all to be completed at a certain time. Otherwise there was no making the barest bone of a living.

Resolving not to look at or speak to her offensive neighbor, the forlorn tyro got through the first day somehow, but on the second morning the machine needle pierced her finger and she had to leave her pile of scarcely touched work and go to have the injury dressed. The agony was great, but she returned as soon as she could—to find that the garments had been taken from her machine.

The shock of losing her job so increased the pain that she walked the floor in distraction, holding her hurt hand in the other. A kindly voiced worker paused long enough to tell her not to worry—but you can't help worrying over a tragedy like that—so the woman took her suffering to the street and walked miles of desperation until, along in the afternoon, she gained nerve enough to go back to the shop to ask for another trial.

When she went to her machine there was the pile of finished garments ready to turn in. The offensive neighbor had laid aside her own work to give her day to the strange comer who was too hurt to do it for herself.

The woman is still on the job and manages to make enough to swear by—or at, according to one's financial views—but her neighbor is her comrade. As she told an old friend the other day:

"I can see only kindness in everything she does and says. And I have come to realize that kindness is a most beautiful thing. And that it knows no class."

* * * *

SHE is a nice little girl and the other day she was left in the care of a kindly neighbor while her mother went down town. And the child had a lovely time. First, she fed the birds—it seems that in that pleasant neighborhood every back garden is a bird sanctuary in the matter of wren boxes and ever-fresh water—then she tidied up the flower beds and hunted the lawn for any marauding weed; then she played around a bit and then she was hungry.

Her hostess asked her little guest what she would like for dinner and the child was sure that what she loved best of everything was bread and gravy—a wish that was bountifully supplied. Of all the good things on the table what she wanted—and had—was bread and gravy and gravy and bread. And at last, in sighing out the languor of complete fulfillment, her eyes caught the vision of a lemon pie on the buffet. It was a most alluring pie, golden brown everywhere except where it was golden yellow, with bubbly crust all around.

The small girl turned to the lady with that might-have-been expression that the poet rhymes about and asked if it had been intended that she should have had a slice of that pie. The lady assured her that it was their dessert, whereupon the guest tried to insert fingers on either side of her blouse waist and shook her head despondently:

"Sometimes I has elastic belts that will stretch and sometimes I has bands. This one is a band."

She knew her limitations.

Which is an important matter, if you recall that one of the wise men who lives in Plutarch's Lives tells his world that "Man knoweth not when it is seemly that he stop." He didn't reckon on small girls.

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A MATRON on the skirmish line of age was dispensing social news to a mature listener of the movie-idol type. She was all georgette and shiny diamonds and he was perfection in white flannel. While they talked each dawdled over a sherry-tinted iced something in a long glass fringed around with mint—at a roof-garden table—with twilight and palms all around.

"You haven't heard about Clara? Well, if you want a shell shock, poor Clara is married—at last! Of course, on the general principle that a single woman belongs to the younger set until she marries or dies of old age, Clara kept up the fiction of being a girl, but—it looked very hopeless for the poor thing until, without giving us the least hint, she went off and married a western man who is all kinds of a millionaire."

Story of Red Cross.

THE battle of Solferino, fought in 1859 between the allied French and Sardinians and the Austrians, was one of the most sanguinary conflicts of modern times. Twenty thousand Austrians and eighteen thousand of the allies were killed and wounded.

To Henri Dunant, a Genevan philanthropist who witnessed the battle, it seemed that the wounded, not the soldiers who met instant death, were the real unfortunates. The military hospitals, overburdened, proved inadequate. Most of the wounded were left in agony. Thousands who might have been saved by timely help died upon the battlefield.

The Swiss philanthropist and other volunteers did all they could to relieve the suffering, but that was comparatively little. The Genevan asked himself what could be done to mitigate the horrors of war. He devoted much thought to the problem until, finally, he was able to suggest a plan of action. This plan he set forth in a pamphlet entitled "A Souvenir of Solferino."

Dunant advocated an international society composed of volunteer nurses who should hold themselves in readiness to follow armies and aid the wounded of any nation, to be protected by all nataions as neutrals and non-combatants engaged in works of mercy.

This pamphlet proved to be the foundation upon which the Red Cross Society was organized. Dunant's project was warmly approved by his own government. When Dunant went to Paris he found that there, too, the pamphlet had made a deep impression.

The day after its publication in the French capital, Mme. de Stael, sister of the Duc de Broglie, caused the Red Cross badges to be displayed in her drawing room. To visitors who asked their meaning she made such convincing answer that both Parisian society and the French government were soon committed to the Red Cross principle.

The international conference that organized the society was held in Geneva in October, 1863. By the end of the following year thirteen governments had officially approved the society's purpose, and today every civilized nation sustains it. The good it has accomplished since then is well known and millions and millions of dollars have been subscribed for its support.

Dunant in winning his fight for the organization of the Red Cross lost his own—that is, his own financial ventures were disastrous. Happily, however, the dowager empress of Russia and the federal council of Switzerland granted him relief in the shape of pensions.

"Circles of Life."

THE traveler among the islands of the tropics finds few more curiously interesting sights than the coral reefs that surround them. The variety of color exhibited by the reefs where the living corals abound is as wonderful and beautiful as that in a flower garden. But the eye of the naturalist detects beauties and points of interest that entirely escape the eye of the casual or careless visitor; for every circling reef is the home of a vast variety of living forms, which exhibit some of nature's most cunning handiwork in the adaptation of means to ends.

Among these curious inhabitants of the tropical waters is, for instance, the caput medusae, an animal that bears a remarkable resemblance to a plant, and whose remote ancestors in the most ancient oceans of the earth contrived to prolong the existence of their kind by developing a means of keeping the water around them comparatively pure. This is only one of a multitude of wonderful little animals to be found in such places.